

## Message Text

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21

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SAB-01

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R 282157Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7551

INFO PANCANAL

USCINCSO

UNCLAS PANAMA 2969

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS/ PINT, PN

SUBJECT: GOP-PRIVATE SECTOR DIAGOGUE: THE UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA

REF: PANAMA 2658

1. ACCOUNTS OF GOP-BUSINESSMEN SEMINAR THAT TOOK PLACE AT RIO HATO APRIL 11-13 CONTINUE TO BE CARRIED IN PRESS, AND ON NATIONAL TV AS WELL (FILM OF MEETING AND SPEECHES ARE SCHEDULED ON PRIME TIME TELEVISION APRIL 28). APRIL 26 PRESS DEALTY WITH DIALOGUE OVER UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA. AS PART OF GOP'S EFFORT TO OPEN DIAGOGUE AND BUILD SUPPORT WITHIN BUSINESS SECTOR, UNIVERSITY RECTOR, DR. ROMULO ESCOBAR, SPOKE TO THE GATHERING OF YOUNG BUSINESSMEN IN AN EFFORT TO ALLAY FEARS THAT THE UNIVERSITY OF PANAMA WAS BECOMING A HAVEN FOR RADICALS AND COMMUNISTS.

2. IN HIS REMARKS AND EXCHANGE WITH THE BUSINESSMEN, ESCOBAR STRESSED THE UNIVERSITY'S TRADITIONAL ROLE AS A "CRUCIBLE OF IDEAS" AND THE NECESSITY FOR UNRESTRICTED INTELLECTUAL INTERCHANGE, INCLUDING THAT OF RADICAL THOUGHT. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE UNIVESITY'S SIZE, 28,000 STUDENTS, MADE REPRESENTATION OF THE FULL POLITICAL SPECTRUM (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, MAOISTS, COMMUNISTS, UNCLASSIFIED

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FIDELISTAS, ULTRA-RIGHTISTS, ETC.) INEVITABLE

WITH THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE UNIVERSITY RECEIVED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM BOTH NORTH AMERICAN (VIA THE KELLOG FOUNDATION) AND PANAMANIAN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, AN INDICATION THAT THE UNIVERSITY IS FAR FROM BEING A COMMUNIST-DOMINATED INSTITUTION.

3. ESCOBAR NOTED THAT THE UNIVERSITY WAS NO LONGER AN ISLAND DETACHED FROM THE PROBLEMS OF REALITY; INDEED IT HAD BECOME A MAJOR SUPPORTER OF THE PANAMANIAN REVOLUTION AND THE ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS OF THE NATION. DESPITE THE DEMONSTRATIONS AND PROTESTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY, HE EMPHASIZED THAT THESE DISRUPTIONS HAVE NOT APPROACHED THE SCALE EXPERIENCED BY UNIVERSITIES IN EUROPE, NORTH AMERICA OR IN OTHER PARTS OF LATIN AMERICA. FINALLY, ESCOBAR ENCOURAGED BUSINESSMEN TO VISIT THE UNIVERSITY, IN ORDER TO GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEMS IT NOW FACES.

JORDEN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRIVATE ENTERPRISE, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS, UNIVERSITIES, SPEECHES  
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**Decaption Note:**  
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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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